

657 Quaker Agent Lawrie Tatum arrived on July 1, 1869, and
 24) hoped to continue Hazen's humble but hopeful start. He
 offered an annual prize of five hundred dollars to be di-
 vided among the ten Indians producing the best crops. The
 Penatekas, who had learned something of farming through
 their contact with the whites in Texas and the agricultural
 tribes, raised some corn and vegetables. As for the other
 [176] Comanches, it was a difficult beginning. The men, unac-
 customed to such labor, left the work to the women. They
 could not plow a straight furrow. They were offended at
 the suggestion that they thin corn which they had taken
 the trouble to cultivate. After eating green watermelons
 and getting the "devil inside my belly," they had even less
 enthusiasm for farming.¹⁸ Native culture patterns con-
 flicted with the new.¹⁹ Fifteen hundred acres were pre-
 pared for cultivation in 1870, but the results were almost as
 [178] disappointing. It was apparent that the transition to an
 agricultural economy was to be a slow and painful process.

657 Colonel R. S. MacKenzie rightly believed it best to make
 231 stockmen of the nomadic hunters he had subdued in 1874,
 # 236 but he made a serious mistake when he chose sheep for
 them. He sold the horses which he had taken in his cam-
 paign against them in 1874, and with the proceeds purchased
 the next year 3,500 thoroughbred sheep and goats in New
 Mexico. These animals, he reasoned, would serve the triple
 purpose of supplying cash from the sale of wool and surplus
 animals, meat for food, and wool for blankets and clothing.

But MacKenzie had not taken all the factors into consid-
 eration. Many of the animals perished on the long drive to
 the reservation and others arrived in very poor condition.
 On issue day the Indians, dressed in their finest, gathered
 at the spot where Fort Sill Indian School now stands, and

[113] 18. Agent Lawrie Tatum, Report, August 15, 1869, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1869, 322. Tatum to the Quaker Commissioner, July, 1870 (MS, Chickasaw Historical Society Library, correspondence files).

[82] 19. A statement by Cheving Elk, October 6, 1870, illustrates this point. "Mr. Tatum gave me a piece of land, but the first night I stopped there a big thunderstorm came right over the house [tipi]. I thought this was bad medicine and lit out and have never been there since." Quoted by W. E. Nye: Carbine and Lance, the Story of Old Fort Sill (Norman, 1937), 232; also see, Hunt Annual Report, 1873, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1873, 62.

each "deserving" headman received a small herd. The Comanches soon discovered that they did not care for lamb chops or mutton stew, and there was not one who knew how to weave a rug or cared to learn. Boys chased the animals on the prairie and shot them with bow and arrow. The severe winter that followed took a heavy toll.²⁰ Camp dogs, wolves, and coyotes got what was left. More sheep were issued in 1878 but most of these died for lack of proper care. The wool could not be marketed satisfactorily, sheep required much care, and the Comanches disliked sheep so much that the plan to make sheepherders of them was abandoned.

MacKenzie had issued the Indians a few cattle. It would have been better had he purchased cattle with the money he spent for sheep and goats. The Comanches appreciated cattle. The transition from buffalo hunters and horse herders to cattlemen would have been relatively easy. But the obstacles were too great. The white cattlemen of the area, wanting the grass and opposed to competition, supported the government's policy of making farmers of the Indians. Cattle required considerable capital investment and the Comanches had no money. When the subsistence allowance of three dollars a month was inadequate or the supplies late in arriving, the Indians ate the stocker cattle acquired by government issue or by purchase. Nevertheless, a few Comanches did obtain herds. Tabanica, who lived four miles north, and Quanah Parker, twenty miles west of Fort Sill, were the first to have herds of their own.

Most of the agents adhered to the government policy of making farmers of the Indians. Since the country along the Washita River appears to be more suitable for agriculture than that in the vicinity of Fort Sill, the Fort Sill and Wichita agencies were consolidated in September, 1878, and placed on the south bank of the Washita at the present site of the small city of Anadarko. The Indian Office then instructed Agent P. B. Hunt to have all the Indians begin farming.

²⁰ Agent J. M. Haworth, Annual Report, 1875 and 1876, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1876, 275, and 1878, 52.

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THE INDIAN MISCELLANY.

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386 rain or pure river water: the point is stopped, and the water
824 allowed to remain on the ashes for a day and night, and then
415 permitted to drip into the vessel placed to catch the ley.

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386 This ley is a little colored, and is clarified by the same process
of filtration through clean white sand, or sand that has been
used for the same purpose before — when clarified, the ley is
used as before stated, and especially to set the colors, which
seems to be the principal use of it. It has no caustic quality
after filtration, but an astringency peculiar to itself — rather a
pungent than burning quality. It is sometimes used to dilute
the darker dyes and produce lighter shades.

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[388
824] The wool to be dyed is washed in warm water until perfectly
cleansed of the natural oil — using the root of a plant very abun-
dant in Texas and southern New Mexico, as well as most of the
southern states, of a very saponaceous quality, and known as the
soap plant. In all their best fabrics — blankets, belts, leggings,
etc., made of wool, their finest fleeces are used, and it is not un-
known to many of our army officers and others, that the Navajoes
give great attention to their management of sheep, and often
produce fleeces almost or quite equal to the merino in fineness
and softness of texture, by their skilful crosses and selections
made after long and minute observations and care. A Comanche
and Navajoe are as much delighted with the possession of a
superior ram and ewe as of a fine horse, to the breeding of which
they also give much attention. Von Thaer would not be more
so with the possession of his finest buck. All their wool is dyed
before spinning, and this is done by submerging it in the dye
and letting it remain ten or fifteen days, the dye-pot being left
covered: but during this soaking the wool is turned over once
every day. Sometimes the lighter shades are imparted to the
wool by soaking a shorter time — they say this produces a clearer
tint. If not dark enough, the same process is repeated with
fresh dye. I have been told by my guide, that the Comanches
fumigate the wool after dying, over a smoke of the above
described wood, to deepen the color, but I never saw it done.

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386 Their green color is produced from the leaves of several plants,
824 the juice of which is expressed in the same manner as from the
flowers, and used in the same manner.